

PR03:068

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 6, 2003

CONTACT: Steve Maviglio

916/ 445-4571

**GOVERNOR DAVIS URGES SCHOOLS TO APPLY FOR
TECHNOLOGY GRANTS**

Beaumont Foundation of America Donates Computer Hardware to Schools and Communities

SACRAMENTO – Governor Davis today joined State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O’Connell and representatives of the Beaumont Foundation of America in announcing \$12.5 million worth of computer hardware available to California schools serving low-income students and non-profit community groups.

“We have made significant progress over the past few years in erasing the digital divide in our schools,” said Governor Gray Davis. “Beaumont Foundation of America’s donation of state-of-the-art computer hardware to schools serving low-income communities will help us continue this work even in difficult budget times.”

The Beaumont Foundation of America is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the principle of digital equity, meaningful participation and information literacy. Established as part of an historic \$2.1 billion nationwide class action lawsuit, the foundation will distribute \$350 million worth of state-of-the-art Toshiba technology equipment to underserved schools, communities and individuals in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

“I am pleased that historically underserved populations in California will benefit from these technology grants,” said Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O’Connell. “Given equal access to digital information, our students will have an equal opportunity to advance intellectually, socially, and economically. With the current budget crisis, unique legal settlements like this are especially welcome.”

The Beaumont Foundation will disburse nearly \$45 million in equipment grants around the United States in 2003, with \$12.5 million specifically earmarked for California. The State will be eligible for a second round of technology grants in 2005. All hardware donated by the Foundation is equipped with the latest in wireless Internet technology to ensure access 24 hours a day, seven days a week, from virtually any location.

“I’d like to see to it that there is not a child in this country who is denied access to a computer, nor is there a child in this country who has access to a computer but does not have a teacher who can teach him how to use it,” said Wayne Reaud, Chairman of the Board of the Foundation.

These technology grants will build on the work of the Davis Administration to provide access to 21st century technology to all California students. In his first term, Governor Davis established

the Education Technology Grant Program of 2000, quickly reducing the high school computer-to-student ratio from one (often outdated) computer for every nine students to roughly one Internet-ready computer for every five students. Governor Davis also created the Digital California Project, a program that has created a digital education backbone by connecting all county offices of education to high speed Internet service. Governor Davis also established teacher and principal training initiatives that focus on California's rigorous academic standards and include modules on technology integration.

California schools applying for technology grants from the Beaumont Foundation must submit proposals by March 31, 2003. All grant applications must be completed via the Beaumont Foundation's online application form, and individual grants must be submitted by phone at 1.866.505.COMP (2667). A team of grant professionals at the Foundation will evaluate applicants based on criteria set forth in the application, also available at www.bmtfoundation.com. Grant applicants serving schools need to demonstrate that technical support can be provided, however information technology staff at schools, districts or partnering organizations that work with a schools or districts can team up with the Foundation to help schools install and receive training. Grant awardees will be notified by May 30, 2003 for projects that begin in September 2003.

###